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President &amp; CEO, Bay Area Council

\*Nominee



Assemblymember Jerry Hill  
California State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0019

August 5, 2010

Dear Assemblymember Hill:

Thank you for your letter of August 3<sup>rd</sup>. I appreciate your good intentions as well as the good intentions of the Peninsula Cities Consortium and I apologize if there is any perception that I was questioning the motives of anyone involved with the PCC. I was not and I will not. However, the fact remains that any effort to significantly delay the Bay Area segment of High Speed Rail beyond the already lengthy CEQA process, a process I might add that allows for more than adequate citizen input, will for all intents and purposes, kill it.

The Bay Area is currently in the middle of a very competitive bidding process with other segments of the California High Speed Rail network, and indeed other HSR proposals across the country, to secure critical federal funding to begin the construction of this historic infrastructure project, a project that will rank alongside the Golden Gate Bridge, the California Water Project and the University of California system in terms of what it means for this state and the quality of life for everyone who lives here. We risk missing out on billions of dollars of investment in this region if we do not act.

You charge that my pointing out this fact does not "contribute to consensus and progress". I disagree. All too often the quest for universal consensus is the very thing that prevents necessary progress from happening. Just look at the Bay Bridge for example. In an effort to appease every interest group and self appointed opinion leader in the state, we are 21 years removed from the earthquake that knocked it down and still nowhere near seeing the replacement span finished. All the while another earthquake looms and this region's most critical piece of infrastructure remains vulnerable.

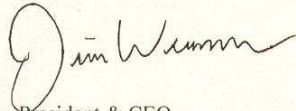
The Peninsula Cities Consortium lists a total of nineteen separate demands on their website that must first be addressed and satisfied before high speed rail can progress. Many of these demands have absolutely nothing to do with planning, engineering or aesthetic concerns, and most would be impossible to fully mitigate. This extensive list is not the basis for an honest an open discussion on high speed rail, rather it represents the desires of a disaffected minority of Peninsula residents, who have already had their say at the ballot box, and they will get an additional opportunity to voice their opinions in the CEQA process.

I agree that a completely unified community around an agreed upon high speed rail plan is the best outcome for all involved, but I fear, I know, that this is not even a remotely realistic scenario. Even if, by some miracle, this consensus should ever come to pass, the money to make it actually happen will have long ago been spent in other communities and other states, communities and states who will be enjoying the benefits of their foresight, while we in the

Bay Area will be mired in ever worsening traffic congestion, and eventual economic isolation.

Sincerely,

Jim Wunderman

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jim Wunderman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

President & CEO  
Bay Area Council

Cc: Mayor Cathy Baylock and Councilmembers, City of Burlingame  
Mayor Patrick Burt and Councilmembers, City of Palo Alto  
Mayor Richard Cline and Councilmembers, City of Menlo Park  
Mayor Kathy McKeithen and Councilmembers, Town of Atherton  
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